

CPYRGHT

DAWSON RELEASE PROSPECT DIM

Red Probe, Trial Foreseen For Peace Corpsman

By STEPHEN E. NORDLINGER
(Moscow Bureau of The Sun)

Moscow, Sept. 24—The prospects appear slight now for the release of Thomas R. Dawson, a Peace Corps volunteer from Annapolis arrested violating the Soviet-Iranian border.

Western observers feel that Dawson, arrested two weeks ago tomorrow, will be tried, probably in late October or November, at the end of a typically long Soviet investigation. He is being held in the Azerbaijanian city of Baku where the trial probably would take place.

Officials at the American Embassy continue to express hope that Dawson will be released promptly but they seem less than optimistic now.

Formal Appeals Made

A representative of the embassy on two occasions has formally appealed to the Foreign Ministry for Dawson's release. Dean Rusk, Secretary of State, reportedly also took up the case in New York with Andrei A. Gromyko, Soviet Foreign Minister.

Many observers here think that Soviet authorities may seize the opportunity of a trial of a Peace Corps volunteer arrested for a border violation to make a wide-ranging attack on the Peace Corps.

Paper Makes Charge

The Peace Corps established about five years ago remains a target for frequent criticism by the Soviet press. It is considered here an espionage organization totally unrelated to the objectives proclaimed by the United States.

"The facts testify irrefutably that the main element in the activities of these new missionaries is not charity but mostly routine espionage and diversionary activities," one newspaper charged.

Another paper characterized

the Peace Corps as an "instrument for the ideological expansion of modern imperialism."

The paper said its members are "Government paid and thoroughly cleared for security and are able to take pictures and decipher codes and operate portable radio transmitters and analyze the political situation in a country."

Two days ago Pravda, the Soviet Communist party paper, charged that CIA agents operate in the guise of "business men, tourists, scientists, students, missionaries and members of the Peace Corps."

Western observers feel that Soviet authorities may use the Dawson case to substantiate their accusations.

Testimony May Be Wide

Under these circumstances there is no reason to believe that a trial of Dawson would be confined to the pertinent testimony.

Such a trial could be turned into a major political event which would encompass all sorts of material the Soviet Union may want to publicize about the Peace Corps.

It also could be used as a forum for a general attack on American "imperialism" and especially American "aggression" in Vietnam. In short there seems little

Efforts Pushed To Free Dawson

Washington, Sept. 24—Senator Tydings (D., Md.) said today he is satisfied that State Department officials are making a maximum effort to obtain the release of Thomas R. Dawson, of Annapolis, a Peace Corpsman held in Russia.

At least ten official approaches have been made to the Soviet Union, Tydings said in a state-

ment. These included personal appeals by Llewellyn Thompson, ambassador at large, and Ambassador Foy Kohler in Moscow.

Tydings said he has had five telephone conversations with Alexander I. Zinchuk, Soviet charge d'affaires, since cancellation of his appointment with Anatoly F. Dobrynin, Russian ambassador, and an effort is being made to obtain another appointment with Dobrynin.

Doubt that Dawson's position as a Peace Corps volunteer is considered by Soviet authorities as a significant factor in the case.

Dawson, 24-year-old son of Mrs. Thomas R. Dawson of Annapolis, was stationed as an English teacher with the Peace Corps at Ahar, an Iranian town about 50 miles from the Soviet border.

CPYRGHT

CPYRGHT